

Mind Map

Being normal is over-rated. Do you agree?

Holden it means that he himself distinguishes himself from the rest of 'the group' or society.

There are such themes as fantasy and dreams because it comes from the instinctive human desire to be different and to stand out.

we want to belong but we also want to stand out. Identity within that minor group as to show we exist as an individual.

From the definition of 'normal' provided on this page, it is understandable in human nature for the desire to "conform to the ideals of society". 'Normal' will allow you to create healthy and connections to the world. Being average will help people to like you etc. they are able to understand the behaviour.

Presence of Normality:

- * Mainstream
- * Temperance (virtue)
- * Equilibrium (stable)
- * Reality
- * Peace
- * Health

Absence of Normality:

- * Eccentricity (behaviour)
- * Disease
- * Disability / mental ill
- * Addiction
- * War and Crime
- * Fantasy and dreams
- * Hallucination / illusion

INDIVIDUALISM

conforming to the ideals of society:

- positive: general admiration or acceptance
- negative: fear of humiliation, fear of rejection, fear of being thought mad...

* "Not deviating very much from the average".

- "Not Normal is often used in a negative sense (improper, sick, etc.)"

* Contradictions: "too much 'normality' can be boring, but boredom is a kind of suffering, which can be considered 'not normal'."

* Social Norms: normality achieved through the enforcement of rules displaying a common link in opinion / theory belief or views and values.

* Sociologists identify 2 types of normality.

- 1) Mores - "What is wrong and right, what is allowed and not allowed, what is wanted and not wanted in a society."

↳ Breaking these rules is a threat and therefore considered 'not normal' in society.

2) Folkways - "In every culture, the rituals, beliefs, traditions and routines."

↳ the categories of an average human whose behaviour is 'normal' if followed correctly

* Long periods of discomfort

* Impaired functioning

* Bizarre behaviour

* Disruptive behaviour

↳ impulsive

"WHAT IS NORMAL?"

"It is dangerous to be right on a subject on which the established authorities are wrong" - Voltaire

↳ In other words, it is dangerous not to be normal even if you are right.

"the most common behaviour in a society" - Emile Durkheim

↳ 'Not Normal' behaviour will invite a negative reaction from others.

"What we commonly mean by a 'normal person' is actually an ideal person whose happy blend of character is a rare occurrence"

- Jung, 1966 par: 80.

"A musician must make his music, an artist must paint, a poet must write, if he is to be at peace with himself. What a man can be, he must be"

- Blaise Pascal.

although stating that we should preserve our talents and enhance our individual skills, it can be considered a conformity. As if directing a path that we must follow, those who stray will not find peace and therefore disrupt the natural order and what is perceived to be 'abnormal' behaviour. But not achieving what one truly

* There are not many forms of literary text that show normal life

→ too boring and too difficult to classify what is normal and what is not.

Not at peace with the world

significant in forming his identity and too sane as he goes on a journey in pursuit of being able to belong.

"David Copperfield kind of crap" that Holden objects to.

opposing character and attitude

even Phoebe "You don't like anything"

Holden cannot co-operate or function properly as there is nothing that he cannot find

psychological procedure and the institution he is in shows the readers his instability in nature.

Sally (the improper proposal)

as if he was testing her...

HOLDEN IS FAR FROM NORMAL!!

despite calling himself 'average' and deeming what he perceives and feels to be the correct conduct at individualism, Holden portrays a number of abnormalities.

the pianist (Ernie)

the senior (Harriman)

Holden's conflicting nature of them being 'phony' is nothing more than a denial that he is one.

He too wants to fit in.

↳ hates to be lonely

He is not used to such a demand

child-like features

"many is of importance."

He (Holden) tries to picture himself tough (ironic name)

Holden becomes lost and confused when the prostitute, "Sunny", offers him sex for money.

GENETIC / INHERITANCE / STATUS:

* Holden is born into a wealthy family and is ironically comfortable around these type of people.

Because he is one of them, he is able to understand their behavior

He too wants to fit in.

↳ hates to be lonely

He is shocked to see she has a copy of Romeo and Juliet

Holden raves about how he is not like others and is not 'phony' and is true to his character, but the fact that he can feel amazed and surprised at this 'abnormal' picture and difference in social and cultural behaviour tells us that he expects the rest of the world to act accordingly to their positions whereas he is not.

→ therefore his accusation of them being 'phony' is nothing more than a denial that he is one.

Holden's conflicting nature

Holden cannot co-operate or function properly as there is nothing that he cannot find

even Phoebe "You don't like anything"

Holden cannot co-operate or function properly as there is nothing that he cannot find

Holden could possibly harbor negative feelings towards his "lonely childhood" (rejection / ignorance) from parents

and continuously despite being a bull in the china shop

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Even though she's different to the other 9 year olds, there are some factors that classify her as a normal girl.
1. the things she writes in her notebook & the way she sleeps, which Holden describes as 'alright'.
adults 'look lovely' when sleeping, but kids 'look alright'.
these moments of respite that Holden finds on the brutality of the outside world.

the sole person who's causing himself pain & confusion, not others.

Arriving at the museum with a suitcase and prepared to run away with Holden signifies that she's not just any 9-year old who is willing to listen and obey.

new Mr Antolini however showed his care, concern and affection towards a lost teenager.

This to Mr Antolini is 'NORMAL'

6. Holden however, Holden sees it as an act of homosexual and sensual gesture and got freaked out.

This shows that what may be 'normal' and 'usual' to one, may in fact be a totally different interpretation and 'unusual' to another.

saying he'd rather hide it from his parents than let them know he's been kicked out.

"This is a people shooting hat... I shoot people in this hat."

flirting with 3 women in their thirties: getting highly aroused by Bernice Krebs, the blonde tourist he danced with in the lavender room and actually felt 'half in love' with one of them.

Relationships, intimacy and sexuality represents complexity, unpredictability and potential for conflict and changes
↓
he's afraid of it!

realised the extent of her brother's doleful & unhappiness behaviour - tries her best to help.
Recognises ambiguous & dubious Holden's grasp on reality is.

Willing to do anything to wake Holden up to the impossibilities of his self-destructive impulses.

she's honest because she has more mature & intelligent than her age implies.

We usually call something normal when our different 'realities' can be reconciled. We however are all generically different, there will be conflicts in our 'realities'.
- nobody can be 'normal' in your perspective and definition of the word.

concept, reality? or just a definition?

conforming to the standard or the common type
- usual; not abnormal; regular; natural part of society or group.
- serving to establish a standard
- usual and ordinary; being what people expect
- approximately average in any psychological trait, intelligence, education success, ability or emotional adjustments.

⇒ definition is completely subjective
⇒ Normal cannot exist objectively
→ as our concept of 'being normal' all varies
"Why try to be someone you're not? Life is hard enough without adding impenetration to the skills required."

advantage
- makes you stand out and defines who you are.
- As a kid it may be frightening but as an adult it can be a huge advantage
- Helps to notice things about the world around more clearly.
- Increase your sense of significance & your perceived value in life.

Never be bullied into silence. Never allow yourself to be made a victim. Accept no one's definition of your life; define yourself.
~ Harvey Fierstein.
Eg: JD Salinger (author)
* choose to be an individual by alienating himself from the society.
* refuses all contact with society: reject the role of public figure, teaching & talking about his writing or instruct others on his methods
* success of the novel brought him unwanted attention.
→ when outside world got ahold of him, he would offer conflicting information & false biographical data.

"If you're ashamed to stand by your colours, you had better seek another flag."
↓
pressure that society reinforce on individuals causing more people to hide behind masks & not opening up.
The chance of getting judged by others based on appearances and social class also reduces.
• Security: the feeling of being judged, teased or tormented by others is also less.
• ACCEPTANCE & NOT DECLINATION: secure and sheltered.

places that he feels the most secure & that he could be himself is the museum of natural history because it doesn't change and symbolises "the world of his catcher in the rye" fantasy.
↓
A world where everything is simple, understandable and infinite.
"the best thing, though, in that museum was that everything always stayed right when it was. Nobody'd move... Nobody'd be different. The only thing that would be different would be you."

"Always be a first rate version of yourself, instead of a second rate version of somebody else."
~ Judy Garland.

"It takes courage to grow up and become who you really are." ~ e.e. Cummings
"You were born an original. Don't die a copy."
~ John Mason

Being normal is over-rated Do you agree? Yes!

Advantages of being unique

"NORMAL!"

Authentic Self

Other Characters

Mr Antolini

Has his own persona
represent education not as a path of conformity but as means for Holden to develop his unique voice and find ideas that are appropriate to him.

Phoebe Caulfield

she's honest because she has more mature & intelligent than her age implies.

Holden

Holden's non-conformity

Red hunting hat

Even though being a virgin, Holden spends much of the novel trying to lose his virginity and being very interested in sex.

Uniqueness and individuality

he desires to be different from everyone else around him.

leaving Pencey 3 days early to stay in a hotel without telling his parents

asking the cab driver where the ducks in Central Park go when lagoon freezes

calling Faith Calverish with the intention of persuading her to have sex with him

JD Salinger created the character of Holden Caulfield from the beginning as an already confused person.

The word 'Caul' symbolises the blindness of childhood or the inability of a child to see the complexity of the adult world.

Just like Holden who stays and holds onto his innocence and doesn't want to grow up.

"Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind." ~ Dr. Seuss

At the beginning of the novel, Holden struggles to find his true identity.

As the audience we see that as he encounters with different people, he puts on a different persona towards each and everyone of them.

eg: • Holden becomes annoyed at Mr Spencer for talking about his poor academic performance.

"Life is a game, boy. Life is a game that one plays according to the rules."

"Yes, sir. I know it is. I know it."

• Holden attacking Stradlater because he refused to talk about his date with Jane Gallagher.

• Holden telling these women & calling them up at night:
- Faith Calverish
- Bernice Krebs & her 2 friends
- Sally Hayes

has affectionate feeling towards some of them.